(b) The total amount of SCCL pending against all classes of customers for supplies of coal from its collieries, as on 31.3.1998 is Rs. 470.40 crores (including interest for belated payment of Rs. 105.55 crores).

(c) SCCL has been making constant efforts to realise the outstanding dues, also seeking intervension of the State Government for realisation of such dues wherever necessary.

Discussions with WTO on Import/Export measures

2141. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the purport of recent discussions that have taken place with the World Trade Organisation on import regulatory and export promotion measures considered imperative by Government in the national interest;

(b) whether attempts are on the part of the WTO to "frontload" the enforcement of some of the provisions of the Marrakesh Treaty that, according to the Government's judgement, are postponeable till the final year of the period of adjustment, namely, 2005; and

(c) whether any progress has been achieved to regroup the NAM countries to resist the over bearingness of the WTO?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) During the recently concluded Meeting for India's Trade Policy Review (held during 16-17 April 1998), India, inter-alia, explained the main features of its trade regime, including the trade reglatory and promotional measures. India's trading partners appreciated India's continued programme of economic reforms, including trade reforms and welcomed India's positive participation in the WTO.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Government has been in consultation with like-minded countries such as the G-15 and the SAARC Groups, for the purpose of devising appropriate strategies to gain maximum benefits from membership of WTO.

Decline in Exports

2142. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that the volume of exports declined gradually after February this year with foreign countries;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) what is the percentage of the country's exports during the corresponding period last year; and

(d) what action has been taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Sir, as per the available data after February, 1998, the quantity of exports in respect of commodities like coffee, pulses, rice guergum meal, finished leather, leather footweat components, Dyes/intermediates and coal tar chemicals and ferro alloys increased, exports of commodities like tea, wheat spices, other cereals, sugar and mollases, sesame and niger seed, groundnuts, shellac, marine products, cotton raw incl. waste, iron ore, inorganic/Organic/Agro Chemicals, Jute and Jute manufactures, Paints/emamels/varnishes etc., Aluminium other than products, and Iron and steel Bar/Rod etc., have declined during march of April, 98. As per the provisional data received from the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics (DGCI&S), the export values registered a growth rate of 2.9% in Dollar terms and 7.2% in Rupee terms during April-Feb., 1997-98 over the corresponding period last year. During April-March, 1997-98 the export values registered a growth rate of 1.5% in Dollar terms and 6.3% in Rupee terms over the corresponding period last year.

(b) Export performance is influenced inter-alia by international market conditions, export competitiveness of domestic